

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 16010 01 OF 02 121340Z

42

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CU-04 DRC-01 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 CCO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 OPR-02 SY-10 NIC-01 AID-20 OC-06 /150 W

----- 086595

O R 121213Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7371

INFO AMCONSUL CHINAG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 16010

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PFOR, TH

SUBJ: STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND THE EARLY CONSTITUTION MOVEMENT

REF: A. BANGKOK 15777

B. BANGKOK 15845

C. BANGKOK 15919

D. FBIS BANGKOK D120226Z

E. FBIS BANGKOK D120455Z OCT 73

SUMMARY: THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND HAS  
ISSUED AN ULTIMATUM THAT THE RTG MUST RELEASE THE  
THIRTEEN EARLY CONSTITUTION MOVEMENT DETAINEES BY NOON OCTOBER  
12 OR THE STUDENTS WILL MOVE OFF THE THAMMASAT CAMPUS WHERE OVER  
50,000 HAVE GATHERED FROM SCHOOLS ALL OVER THAILAND.

THE RTG HAS PREVIOUSLY WARNED THE STUDENTS THAT STREET DEMONSTRATIONS  
ARE ILLEGAL. SHOULD THE RTG MOVE TO SUPPRESS A STREET  
DEMONSTRATION, A FEW CRACKED HEADS WOULD BE POSSIBLE BUT  
NOT CERTAIN IN VIEW OF THE DESIRE OF BOTH SIDES TO  
AVOID VIOLENCE. FACULTY AND PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE STUDENTS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 16010 01 OF 02 121340Z

CONTINUES TO RUN HIGH. THE RTG MADE PUBLIC SOME OF THE

EVIDENCE AGAINST THE THIRTEEN DETAINEES, BUT MANY OBSERVERS FEEL THE RTG FAILED TO SUBSTANTIATE ITS CASE. NEVERTHELESS INFLUENTIAL NEWSPAPER COLUMNISTS HAVE COUNSELLED MODERATION AND COMPROMISE TO AVOID BLOODSHED. END SUMMARY.

1. THE NATIONAL STUDENT CENTER OF THAILAND HAS ISSUED AN ULTIMATUM GIVING THE RTG UNTIL NOON OCTOBER 13 TO RELEASE THE EARLY CONSTITUTION MOVEMENT(ECM) DETAINEES, OR THE STUDENTS WILL TAKE TO THE STREETS. ALTHOUGH THE NSCT WILL PROBABLY TRY TO KEEP ANY STREET DEMONSTRATIONS PEACEFUL, THE RTG STAND THAT SUCH DEMONSTRATIONS ARE ILLEGAL IMPLIES THAT IT WILL SUPPRESS THEM FORCEABLY IF NECESSARY.

2. STUDENT LEADERS HAVE PLEDGED THAT THEY ARE COMMITTED TO A PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION, AND HAVE CURRIED THEIR PUBLIC IMAGE ASSIDUOUSLY BY CONSPICUOUSLY GIVING ALMS AND CLEANING UP AFTER THEMSELVES.

3. FOR THE FIRST TIME UNIVERSITY TEACHING STAFFS ARE OVERWHELMINGLY COMMITTED TO THE STUDENTS' CAUSE. THE STAFF OF THAMMASAT IS MEETING AMONG ITSELF AND WITH THE STUDENTS. STAFF MEMBERS HAVE ALSO ADDRESSED THE ASSEMBLAGE. THE CHULALONGKORN FACULTY SENATE UNANIMOUSLY PASSED A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE SPEEDY RELEASE OF THE THIRTEEN DETAINEES, THE EARLY PROCLAMATION OF A

CONSTITUTION, AND THE RECOGNITION OF FORMS OF EXPRESSION.

4. PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE STUDENTS IS LESS EASY TO ASSESS; HOWEVER, THE PUBLIC IS GENEROUSLY CONTRIBUTING TO STUDENT COFFERS. A FINANCE MINISTRY OFFICIAL TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT 20,000 BAHT (1000 DOLLARS) HAD BE COLLECTED IN HIS MINISTRY. REPORTEDLY OVER 100,000 BAHT (\$5000) HAS BEEN COLLECTED ALL TOGETHER. MONEY IS ALSO COMING IN FROM OVERSEAS THAI STUDENT ORGANIZATION.

5. DEMONSTRATIONS ARE ALSO IN PROGRESS AT UPCOUNTRY SCHOOLS. LARGE RALLIES IN CHIANG MAI HAVE INCLUDED THE TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE FOR THE FIRST TIME,  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BANGKO 16010 01 OF 02 121340Z

AND STUDENTS FROM THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE WILL PROBABLY JOIN. CHIANG MAI AREA STUDENTS ARE FILTERING INTO BANGKOK, BUT THE POLICE SPECIAL BRANCH HAS STOPPED SOME BUSLOADS OF STUDENTS HEADING FOR BANGKOK. A PAMPHLET SIGNED BY THE "NORTHERN STUDENT CENTER" IN CHIANG MAI CALLED FOR A RALLY IN THAT CITY AND THE OVERTHROW OF THE "ILLEGAL" GOVERNMENT.

6. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PRAPHAT CHARUSATHIEN IS DIRECTING THE RTG RESPONSE FROM THE SAFETY OF THE COMMUNIST SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS COMMAND (CSOC) HEAD-QUARTERS. NEWSPAPER REPORTS QUOTED PRAPHAT OCTOBER 11 AS VOWING THAT THE NEW CONSTITUTION WILL BE READY IN 20 MONTHS (REF D) INSTEAD OF THE FORMER PREDICTION OF THREE YEARS. HE HAS BEEN REPEATEDLY QUOTED OVER THE LAST COUPLE DAYS AS SAYING THAT IF POLICE INVESTIGATIONS CLEAR ANY DETAINEES, THEY WILL BE IMMEDIATELY RELEASED. THESE ANNOUNCEMENTS HAVE APPARENTLY NOT WEAKENED STUDENT DETERMINATION.

7. IN THE PUBLIC EYE, THE RTG BUNGLED ITS CHANCE TO SUPPORT ITS CHARGES OF CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE ECM WHEN THE SPECIAL BRANCH AIRED SOME OF ITS EVIDENCE ON THE EVENING TELEVISION NEWS OCTOBER 11. MOST OF THE EVIDENCE SEEMED TO BE ANTI-GOVERNMENT POSTERS, SOME WRITINGS IN CHINESE, AND TEXTBOOKS. ONE NEWSPAPER CHARACTERIZED THESE MATERIALS AS "USUALLY PUBLICLY SOLD IN THE LOCAL MARKET ANYWAY". WHETHER OR NOT THE SPECIAL BRANCH ACTUALLY SEIZED ANY DAMAGING MATERIALS, A SOURCE AT THAMMASAT HAS SAID THAT FACULTY MEMBERS AND STUDENTS DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE RTG HAS PRESENTED A STRONG CASE. THEY THEREFORE WILL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE DEMONSTRATIONS.

8. THE GOVERNMENT SEIZED MOST OF THE MATERIALS FROM THE LAW OFFICES OF FORMER MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, KHAISAENG SUKSAI. THREE OF THE ARRESTED STUDENTS, PRIDI BUNSUE, A THAMMASAT POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT; BOONSONG CHALETHOM, DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE NSCT, AND THANYA CHUNKATHATHARN, A THAMMASAT POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT AND CONTRIBUTOR TO "MAHARAT" WEEKLY MAGAZINE; LIVED AT KHAISAENG'S OFFICE. THANYA IS KNOWN IN STUDENT CIRCLES

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BANGKO 16010 01 OF 02 121340Z

AS A "LEFTIST", AND THE ASSOCIATIONS OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT CRITICS WITH KHAISAENG QUITE PROBABLY PREJUDICED THE ECM IN RTG EYES.

9. STUDENT SPEAKERS ADDRESSED A FEW ANTI-AMERICAN STATEMENTS TO THE THROG AT THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY FOR THE FIRST TIME OCTOBER 11. SOME OF THE STATEMENTS CRITICIZED US AID TO THE POLICE, WHO ARE SEEN AS THE STUDENTS' OPPRESSORS. OTHERS ACCUSED THE RTG LEADERSHIP OF BEING AMERICAN LACKEYS. ANTI-AMERICANISM IS A BELATED AND SUBSIDIARY ISSUE, HOWEVER.

10. WITH THE INCREASING POSSIBILITY OF CONFRONTATION, INFLUENTIAL NEWSPAPER COLUMNISTS HAVE COUNSELLED MODERATION. THIA-LANGUAGE "PRACHATHIPATAI," WHOSE

EDITORIAL STAFF CONSTITUTED SEVEN SIGNATURES TO THE ECM  
PETITION, CALLED OCTOBER 12 FOR BOTH SIDES TO "STAND  
STILL FOR A SECOND AND THINK OF THEIR BEING  
THAI, IN ORDER THAT THE TENSE SITUATION CAN BE RECTIFIED  
THROUGH COMPROMISE." COLUMNIST SON THALAY IN THE  
THAI-LANGUAGE "DAILY NEWS" ASKED OCTOBER 12 THAT THE RTG  
NOT TAKE DRASTIC ACTION AGAINST THE STUDENTS SINCE "WE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BANGKO 16010 02 OF 02 121326Z

42

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CU-04 DRC-01 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 CCO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 OPR-02 SY-10 NIC-01 AID-20 OC-06 /150 W

----- 086549

O R 121213Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7372

INFO AMCONSUL CHINAG MAI

AMCONSUL UDORN

CINCPAC

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 16010

ARE ALL THAIS AND SHOULD THEREFORE RESORT TO A COMPROMISE."  
HOWEVER, INFLUENTIAL NEWSPAPERMAN KUKRIT PRAMOTE HAS  
INDIRECTLY SUGGESTED THAT THE RTG LEADERSHIP RESIGN (REF E).

11. COMMENT: THE NSCT ULTIMATUM COULD STIMULATE A  
CRESCENDO WITHIN THE NEXT 24 HOURS. THE RTG COULD CON-  
SIDERABLY COOL OFF THE SITUATION BY RELEASING SOME OF THE  
DETAINEES, BUT IT IS OBVIOUSLY RELUCTANT TO KNUCKLE  
UNDER IN THE NOT NAIVE BELIEF THAT CONCESSIONS TEND TO  
PRODUCE OUTRAGEOUS FUTURE DEMANDS. VIOLENCE IS  
POSSIBLE, BUT GIVEN PRESSURES FOR COMPROMISE AND THE THAI  
TALENT TO AVOIDING BLOODSHED, WE BELIEVE THAT THE RTG  
AND THE STUDENTS WILL AGREE ON A WAY OUT WITHIN THE NEXT

FEW DAYS. IN THE LONG TERM, BOREDOM MAY PLAY A GREATER  
ROLE THAN ANY OTHER FACTOR. THE PROBLEM OF STUDENT  
AND POPULAR DISCONTENT WITH A SLUGGISH GOVERNMENT  
WILL PLAGUE THAI POLITICAL LEADERS FOR SOME TIME TO  
COME, HOWEVER. WHEN THEY GET OVER THIS CRISIS,  
THANOM AND PRAPHAT SHOULD EXPECT PERSISTENT AND SHARPER  
CHALLENGES TO THE POWER THEY HAVE SHARED OVER THE LAST  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BANGKO 16010 02 OF 02 121326Z

DECADE.  
UNGER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 12 OCT 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1973BANGKO16010  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS UNGER  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** BANGKOK  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1973/newtext/t19731036/aaaabapb.tel  
**Line Count:** 238  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION EA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 5  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** A. BANGKOK 15777  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 05 DEC 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <05-Dec-2001 by smithrj>; APPROVED <27-Dec-2001 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND THE EARLY CONSTITUTION MOVEMENT  
**TAGS:** PINS, PFOR, TH  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005